



EVALUATION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDIES

YEZREEL VALLEY COLLEGE

COMMITTEE FOR THE EVALUATION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDIES IN ISRAEL

December 2022

Section 1: Background and Procedures

- 1.1 In the academic year 2022, the Council for Higher Education [CHE] put in place arrangements for the evaluation of study programs in the field of Political Science and International Relations in Israel.
- 1.2 The Higher Education Institutions [HEIs] participating in the evaluation process were:
- 1.3 To undertake the evaluation, the Vice Chair of the CHE appointed a Committee consisting of¹:
 - **Prof. Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey** – *Chair*. Head of Department (2019-2022), and Fellow of the British Academy Department of Government, LSE, UK.
 - **Prof. Dr. Tanja A. Börzel** – Professor of political science and chair for European Integration at the Otto Suhr Institute for Political Science, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany.
 - **Prof. Joel Migdal** – Robert F. Philip Professor of International Studies, University of Washington, USA.
 - **Prof. James Perry** – Professor of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University, USA.
 - **Prof. Avner de Shalit** – Political philosopher and Max Kampelman Chair of Democracy and Human Rights, Hebrew University, Israel.

Pe'er Baris-Barnea and Anat Haina served as the Coordinators of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

- 1.4 The evaluation process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (January 2022). Within this framework the evaluation committee was required to:
 - examine the self-evaluation reports submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in Political Science and International Relations;
 - conduct on-site visits at those institutions participating in the evaluation process;
 - submit to the CHE an individual report on each of the academic units and study programs participating in the evaluation;
 - set out the committee's findings and recommendations for each study program;
 - submit to the CHE a general report regarding the evaluated field of study within the Israeli system of higher education including recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study;
- 1.5 The evaluation committee examined only the evidence provided by each participating institution — considering this alongside the distinctive mission set out by each institution in terms of its own aims and objectives. This material was further elaborated and explained in discussions with senior management, lecturers,

¹ The committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

students, and alumni during the course of each one-day visit to each of the institutions.

- 1.6 In undertaking this work, the committee considered matters of quality assurance and quality enhancement — applying its collective knowledge of developments and good practices in the delivery of higher education in Political Science (mainly from European countries and the USA) to the evaluation of such provision in Israel.

Section 2: Executive Summary

Overall, the Committee was very impressed with the clear expressions of passion and dedication given to the common mission of Yezreel Valley College (YVC). It is evident from our conversations that, from the President of the College to the alumni, the mission to elevate first-generation students to the study of higher education was understood and embraced by all. Moreover, both the concept and reality of diversity in the student body have been achieved with unusually great success by YVC. It is this unique and valuable contribution to higher education that the Committee finds to be one of the most remarkable features of YVC.

The Committee was pleased to meet with the President, the Head of the Department, senior faculty, adjunct faculty, current students and alumni and was grateful for their time and effort to attend the meetings. All the participants were enthusiastic, and it is apparent they take pride in the Department of Political Science.

The Department of Political Science is a teaching-oriented unit where senior faculty consider teaching, research, and teamwork as part of their goals. The setting of the College encourages dialogue and interaction between students and faculty, thereby facilitating activities, a sense of belonging, and pride.

This report details by subject areas the observations by the Committee of the Department of Political Science at YVC. The Committee was very satisfied with the Department and its approach to teaching. The recommendations made by the Committee seek to improve existing strengths of the Department and advance its overall standing in Israeli higher education. The recommendations focus on additional staffing resources, more support for faculty undertaking research endeavors, and ways to facilitate and encourage more research.

Section 3: Observations

3.1 The Institution and the Parent Unit

In an interview with the President, three goals for the institution were identified:

1. **Reversing the apparent decline in student enrollment in social science study programs.** This is being addressed by YVC with an explicit approach that focuses on a multidisciplinary provision of the College's BA programs.

2. **Positioning the College competitively in order to attract minority students.**

3. Position YVC as a leading college in the sphere of research in Israel. The challenge in doing so is, of course, finding the resources to underpin this research, without compromising teaching excellence.

The President also noted that the College had developed a strategic plan in 2017. The College is currently revisiting the strategic plan in the aftermath of the pandemic.

3.2 Internal Quality Assurance

The interpretation of the staff (faculty members and Head of Department) is that internal quality assurance was achieved via the Self-Evaluation Report they submitted to the CHE. This is the first CHE evaluation process YVC has undergone in the field of Political Science, and as such, is a good start. In years to come, it would be helpful to continue monitoring and self-evaluation.

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Internal Quality Assurance:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
					X

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Internal Quality Assurance:

	1	2	3	4	5
					X

The Committee concurs with the Department's performance in "Internal Quality Assurance".

3.3 The Department/Study Program

The Department manages to fulfil the YVC's mission and offers a range of courses in political science and international relations (IR). The Department and College's mission is to provide education opportunities to first-generation students and to teach a diverse group of students. The student body is indeed unique. Many of the students work full time while studying; the average age of the students (according to the Head of Department) is 27; and many students need financial or other support. The College goes out of its way to offer these, and the

students express a high level of satisfaction with the support received from the College. The Committee appreciates the College's approach and mission and finds this mission very successful.

At the moment the Department offers its courses as part of a double-major BA degree. Some of the students expressed their wish to study more courses in Political Science, but the Committee acknowledges that the President and the Head of Department believe that the double-major BA degree is more feasible.

During their third year, students can choose to specialize in IR. Having said that, **the Committee believes that the Department could benefit from another lecturer in IR** if it indeed wants to offer such a specialization, which is attractive to students. Currently many students choose to specialize in IR but there aren't enough courses on offer.

The Committee also thinks that the Department could attract more students if it strengthens the international relations and comparative politics (global affairs) components of the degree program. Such a program could emphasize aspects of the relations between nations or comparisons among them, but in short should elevate attention given to global issues.

The Committee is happy with the list of courses and the syllabi. However, it is clear from the syllabi and also from what the lecturers, the adjunct lecturers, and the students told the committee that texts in English are an obstacle and that they are rarely read. **The Committee believes that strengthening the teaching of English will tremendously help the students** not only to read texts but in whatever they do in life. The students complain that the way English is taught in the College is not suited to improve their capabilities to express themselves orally and in writing.

With regard to the application of the practical approach, there were some inconsistencies. On the one hand, students are enthusiastic about the tools acquired in these courses, which, they say, help them "navigate their ways in life." On the other hand, some lecturers claim that more theory-oriented courses are required, especially when it comes to the two tracks of specialization (IR and auditing).

While faculty members seem genuinely interested in each other's work, research and teaching, there is a structural problem causing a lack of sense of academic/intellectual community among faculty members and students. Students expressed a high level of satisfaction with regard to their relationships with the staff, but some lecturers articulated their frustration about not having enough time and opportunities to create a proper academic atmosphere and community with the students.

The Department does not have a departmental seminar, but there are plans to introduce this, jointly with the Criminology and Sociology departments. The faculty members expressed a worry that the students will not show up and that the adjunct faculty will come only if it is conducted on the day during which they teach. But the hope is that all faculty will attend the seminar.

At the moment the YVC lacks any internationalization strategy but plans to develop such a strategy in the future.

The Committee is concerned about the blended courses taught in the Department. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, these are courses assimilating digital pedagogy within the curriculum (pg. 18). Some of these were described during the visit as courses that should be partly online, for example, a pre-recorded lecture once a week. The Committee understands that students are happy with this format as it saves them time, they can watch the recorded and uploaded lectures late at night, etc., but some lecturers counter with the value of live exchange. **The efficiency and effectiveness of this teaching format should be assessed.**

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Study Program:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
N/A					

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Study Program:

	1	2	3	4	5
				X	

Overall, the Committee believes that the program is strong and can be further strengthened through the recommendations listed.

3.4 Teaching and Learning Outcomes

The Committee did not identify any teaching regulations that were perceived as problematic by administrative staff, faculty, or students. Faculty indicated they were supported by the Department Head with respect to review and feedback of their syllabi. Students expressed favorable feedback on student satisfaction surveys, and students and alumni were similarly supportive of teaching during the interviews with the Committee.

The College's Teaching Advancement Center was given high marks by both faculty and administrative staff for cultivating development of teaching skills, providing workshops and seminars, and supporting innovative teaching methods. Two areas where the committee was unable to secure affirmation of the Center's work were:

1. Development of faculty competencies for self-assessment. Although the Self-Evaluation Report indicates that self-assessment is used "to some extent" to evaluate

- quality teaching, faculty were unable to point to any support for performing self-assessments, and no one was able to define clearly what self-assessment represented.
2. Technology platforms for online and blended learning. The President indicated that YVC does not have a centralized, College-supported technology platform (e.g., Moodle, CANVAS), but is in the process of assessing a platform for procurement. Procuring such a platform is important to support faculty and students in light of recent increases in blended learning.

Teaching evaluation relies almost exclusively on teaching surveys, which the Self-Evaluation report identified as fully effective. The Committee did not encounter any disagreements from faculty or students with this assessment.

During the Committee's conversations with College and Department stakeholders, we heard consistent messages that the Department prepared students well for both jobs and further education (i.e., a second degrees). With respect to second degrees, all alumni whom the Committee interviewed pursued their second degrees within a single university. It thereby restricts the extent to which the Committee is able to assess the preparation to second degrees provided by the Department.

The Committee embarked on its assessment of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) with some uncertainty. The Self-Evaluation Report indicated that until 2019 no specific goals had previously been written for programs offered by the Department of Political Science. The Report also noted that ILOs were currently reviewed and updated periodically "to some extent."

After interviews with the Department Head, faculty, students, and alumni, the Committee concludes that ILOs have been effectively developed, are regularly and appropriately reviewed, and understood by faculty and students. Faculty develop ILOs for their course syllabi, and the ILOs are then reviewed by the Department Head prior to offering the course. Both current students and alumni indicated during interviews that they understood the ILOs for their courses and believe faculty appropriately delivered the ILOs for their courses.

The Self-Evaluation Report identifies two strategies for development and improvement of teaching and learning outcomes:

1. "Development of a systematic and organized monitoring of the implementation of the Bologna process and learning about the degree of achievement of the expected products toward all courses."
2. An annual assessment of the outcomes at the end of the year.

The Committee concurs with these strategies for development and improvement of teaching and learning outcomes, particularly the second of the two strategies. ILOs now are associated exclusively with courses, but no reviews of ILOs are conducted at year's end or completion of the degree. In light of the Department's emphasis on capstones and practica, the Committee believes these courses could become the context in which more holistic reviews of ILOs could be conducted, and students can take a more proactive role in assessing their progress toward their learning outcomes. That is, by the end of the degree program, the pathway of ILOs from each individual course, to the study program, to the final degree should be evident.

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Teaching and Learning Outcomes:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
				X	

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Teaching and Learning Outcomes:

	1	2	3	4	5
				X	

The Committee's review of teaching and learning outcomes resulted in a finding that the Department's overall performance is satisfactory, the same rating as the Department.

3.5 Students

The Department manages to fulfil the College's mission as the student body is diverse and has a high percentage of first-generation students. The students seem very satisfied with the study program, as well as the personal attention they receive from the faculty and the Head of Department. They highly appreciate the care, as well as the financial and other support they receive at the YVC, and praise the teaching quality and the accessibility of the staff. Both students and staff expressed passion, devotion, and loyalty. The Alumni also explained they were eager to meet the Committee and reciprocate for what they had received from the YVC. The institution's mission is widely shared.

Some of the students seem satisfied with the double-major program, suggesting that the combination of Political Science and the Interdisciplinary Program of Criminology, Law and Middle East Studies prepares them very well to be competitive for jobs in the political arena or in local government, etc. Others would rather specialize in a more profound manner in political science, and especially contemporary global affairs, and would therefore like to take more courses in the field. Students are generally also very happy with the Internship course and with the program's practical-oriented approach.

The students are more critical of the level of English taught. While they argue that tackling English teaching should begin in primary school, they do expect a higher level of English teaching, especially when it comes to being able to express themselves orally and in writing.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, about 40% of the students manage to finish their degree within three years, and another 40% within four years. These numbers are impressive,

taking into account that many of the students work part-time or even full-time while studying, and some of them already have families. The dropout rate is, according to the Self-Evaluation Report, less than 15%, and according to the President during the visit, around 4%. Most students graduate with a final grade between 80 and 100.

Students from minority groups are entitled to scholarships, which apparently takes into consideration their family's income. **The committee suggests that this should be made transparent.** On the basis of merit, students can also apply for scholarships for their third year.

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, the admission criteria and graduation requirements are defined by each department. Students enrolling in the program do not have to take a psychometric test, and the range of the Matriculation exams average of those admitted is from 60 to 100. It can be seen (p. 92), and this is quite impressive, that in recent years all who were admitted also enrolled in the program.

According to the President, 20% of the college's students have a variety of special needs. The YVC caters for those needs, and the students seem satisfied with this.

Five out of the seven alumni whom the Committee met are students studying towards the MA, all at a single university. All of them said that the first degree was more demanding and that compared with their fellow students who did their BA at that other university, they were well prepared for graduate studies.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, contact with alumni should improve; at the moment there is no alumni organization. An alumni coordinator should be appointed; having said that, the Committee believes that taking into account the heavy burden with which the staff members cope, this is perhaps not of first priority. At the moment, the Department administrator takes care of this (p. 110).

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Students:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
				X	

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Students:

	1	2	3	4	5
				X	

The Committee concurs with the rating of the Department, in its performance in "Students".

3.6 Academic Faculty and Human Resources

Both YVC and the Department should be congratulated for the clear expressions of passion and dedication given to the common mission of Yezreel Valley College. The lecturers are also passionate about their teaching, and enjoy teaching a diverse group of students. At the same time, lecturers claim that “the greatest challenge is finding my way to the students’ minds and hearts.”

Having said this, there is room for improvement. The Committee identifies several areas for improvement in YVC’s approach to managing its academic faculty.

The first area for improvement is in mentoring junior faculty. It was unclear from the Self-Evaluation Report the extent to which the Department provides a structure for mentoring junior faculty, and so the Committee sought clarity from the Head of the Department on this issue. It was explained that, in her view, mentoring within the internal structure of the Department would not achieve the intended purpose of advancing the career progression of junior faculty. The reason given is that a generational divide exists between older and younger faculty, whereby the older faculty do not have the requisite experience, or for that matter, have not yet acquired the career progression themselves in order to convey this to younger faculty. However, it was clear that the Head of Department herself sought to provide career direction and advice to younger faculty, and this was gratefully received.

The Committee understood that at least one faculty member apparently paid for an external mentoring arrangement, which seemed to the Committee highly unusual and unfair to that faculty member.

The Committee further notes that in the Self-Evaluation Report, the Department is seeking to improve support for faculty through seminars and more support to faculty “in addressing challenges they encounter in their research” in part by “creating a culture of knowledge-sharing among faculty”. We applaud these efforts.

Overall, **the Committee recommends that the Department investigates ways to encourage more mentoring of junior faculty.** This may include advising on and promoting more international engagement, as well as pursuing research which adheres to clear guidance from CHE on the specific promotion criteria for academic faculty at Israeli colleges.

Both the Head of Department and faculty members were clear that promotion is, in theory, based on three pillars: research; teaching; and service/citizenship. However, the weights given to each of these three were not clearly specified. The Committee recognizes that this lack of clarity is common in institutions of higher education across the world, but the Committee is nonetheless of the view that more can be done to lend greater clarity to faculty as to how best to allocate their time, energy and focus.

Moreover, at least one faculty member noted that the empirical definition of service/citizenship was not clear. In addition, the Committee found that occasionally efforts to provide more service were blocked or found unwelcome by the Department or College.

Another faculty member was of the view that promotion to professor was based too much on metrics (journal impact factors, Google Scholar citations, etc.) rather than substance. A Committee member with ample experience in CHE promotion cases notes that such metrics are by no means the predominant or even deciding factor for promotions, as the materials of candidates are read, external letters are required, and so on.

The Committee concludes that better clarity could be given to faculty on both the research and service components of the promotions criteria. The Committee also notes that, as there is no question that the faculty en masse are providing excellent teaching and that the time and energy devoted to this excellence in teaching is extensive, there may in the end be an element of 'burnout' experienced by faculty members.

The Department as a whole appears to be clear that, in terms of gaps in the teaching provision, there is a need to recruit another faculty member to teach courses in International Relations. The Committee discusses and makes recommendations with respect to International Relations in the Study Program section of this Report.

In addition to International Relations, the Department also maintains that, going forward, recruitment for positions in Comparative Politics and Methodology would help to address current strains in the provision of teaching in these areas.

The Committee is also of the view that the introduction of the new MA in Public Administration and Public Policy may dilute and diminish teaching resources in the Political Science Department by transferring current faculty (or parts of current faculty) into the new MA. The President of the College did not seem to suggest that such staffing resources would be replaced in the Department. The Committee is concerned that the future of the Political Science Department itself may be under threat if these lines are not filled. **The Committee recommends that, should staffing resources in the Department migrate into the new MA program, that these staffing resources should be replaced without delay.** Adjuncts are not sufficient in this regard; the Committee recommends that permanent faculty replacements be found to ensure the sustainability of the Political Science Department.

Finally, the Committee is of the view that more staffing resources could be obtained relatively inexpensively by exploring the possibility of introducing postdoctoral appointments. This is discussed further in the Research section of this Report (section 3.8).

The Department appears to be well-run administratively. The Head of the Department is clearly appreciative of her administrative staff and maintains that there are no problems in this area. Moreover, this appears to be validated by comparisons made by some alumni to another Israeli academic institution, where support and services were found to be of poorer quality than those received at YVC.

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Academic Faculty and Human Resources:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
			X		

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Academic Faculty and Human Resources:

	1	2	3	4	5
			X		

The Committee concurs with the rating of the Department, in its performance in “Academic Faculty and Human Resources”.

3.7 Diversity

The Self-Evaluation Report states that YVC is committed “to provide affordable access to higher education for residents with diverse backgrounds who live in Israel’s northern periphery” (p. 7). The mission is enthusiastically shared by all stakeholders, from the President to the students and alumni. The committee is very impressed by the extent to which YVC has succeeded in promoting diversity in student recruitment, teaching, and outreach programs.

The success is particularly remarkable given the unique composition of the student body. Students come from a variety of minority groups. Many of them work full-time and have families. The faculty, the administrative staff, and the students have created a culture of mutual respect and constructive dialogue across ethnic and political divides. They share a sense of community based on coming from Israel’s Northern periphery and a desire for upward social mobility.

The Committee encourages YVC to document its success, e.g. by publishing an annual diversity report. The Committee is of the view that the College’s success could be more widely publicized in a narrative spelling out the institutional commitment to diversity, and the support mechanisms through which YVC makes diversity and inclusion work. The College could use the report and narrative for marketing purposes to attract students, postdocs and (international) visiting researchers.

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Diversity:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
				X	

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Diversity:

	1	2	3	4	5
					X

The committee applauds the Department’s performance in “Diversity”.

3.8 Research

The research output of the faculty is impressive, especially in light of the heavy teaching loads and the significant time they spend counselling students and engaging in college service. Almost all the faculty members are engaged in research and have published books and articles in their fields. One senior faculty member has written multiple articles on genocidal forcible child transfer and other issues of human rights; another specializes in issues of migration and voting behavior; and still another has written a book (2020) on education and continental philosophy. The topics researched by the faculty cover a broad spectrum of political science.

The President indicated that YVC is now one of the top three Israeli colleges overall in research. The research interests and activities of the Department faculty align with the YVC’s emphasis on research as one of the primary goals of its overall mission.

What does not align as well is the actual structural conditions affecting research output. Faculty members commented on the difficulty of engaging in research and publishing given the other responsibilities the College places on them, and the Head of Department indicated that a major challenge for the Department is to create conditions conducive to faculty research. It is important for YVC to align, as much as possible, the teaching and service demands with the desire to enhance research and publication. In that light, **the Committee recommends:**

1. **Rolling over research budgets** so that if funds have not been used in a given award year, they be made available to the researcher in following years. YVC’s research budgets are relatively generous (\$6,000) and can both seed future research grants and pay for limited current research activities. Given other commitments, though, it may be difficult for faculty members to utilize them in the limited time frame of one year.

2. **Concentrate teaching for those with research plans into two semesters**, rather than three. In such a system, all researchers would be given one semester off from teaching (although they would still maintain other responsibilities, such as committee work and student counselling). Time off from teaching would be rotated, so that in any semester (fall, spring, summer), only one or two faculty members would not be teaching.
3. **Develop a formal postdoctoral teaching program**. Such a program recruiting postdocs from abroad and Israeli universities would be cost-effective (as it is a scholarship to help these postdocs develop skills for a future career, it is tax free), a boon for those finishing Ph.Ds and not yet absorbed into the labor market, a source to staff department courses, and exposure of students (and other faculty) to the newest research in the field of political science.
4. **Increasing sabbaticals** for faculty engaging in research. The College should investigate funding for expanding the number of sabbaticals, which is very effective in providing the time necessary for cultivating, executing, and writing up research.
5. **Formalizing reduction of teaching loads to enhance research**.
6. **Consider creating research assistantships** for current students to support faculty engaged in research. This will also provide a rich educational experience for the students.
7. **Building real world research into class projects and assignments, including collection of data, interviewing, and more**. This could help improve the fit between faculty research and teaching.

All these, we believe, would allow for the teaching that is the primary mission of the College while enabling faculty to engage in research and publishing work that has an impact on the field.

Mentoring of faculty could be invaluable in enhancing research output. Issues such as how to organize the writing of a journal article, how and where to submit articles, identifying appropriate publishers for monographs, and indicating competent editors for submission to English language outlets, would all be invaluable to the faculty. The Head of Department now performs some of this sort of mentoring, but it would be more effective to identify a number of such mentors, both inside the College and outside.

As the Head of Department indicated, it is important to create a culture of research in the Department. The revival of the Research Forum will help develop such a culture. Although there are difficulties in creating such a culture, various ad hoc groups, such as writing groups, even involving only three or four faculty members, can be very useful in creating such a culture. Attending academic conferences is essential in exposing faculty to others' cutting-edge research relevant to their own and enabling them to develop international collaborations.

YVC emphasizes "creating productive relationships with the communities and institutions around the College." It notes that the "Department's research activity plays a crucial role in this vision and faculty members' research interests focus on exploring the political-social-governmental resources that impact the life of various groups by considering geographic, ethnic, cultural and social factors" (p. 57). We note that the CHE guidelines for promotion does

not explicitly recognize research that impacts local communities, as well as the publication outlets for this kind of research (which can be in Hebrew).

Consequently, research undertaken by a number of YVC faculty does not appear to be sufficiently recognized in CHE’s promotion procedures. **CHE should recognize and reward research which is relevant to the communities in which the colleges are embedded.**

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Research:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
			X		

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Research:

	1	2	3	4	5
			X		

The Committee concurs with the rating of the Department, in its performance in “Research”, and believes it can be strengthened by following the recommendations listed.

3.9 Infrastructure

The Department suffers from no space constraints, classrooms are well-equipped, and the library is up to date. The Committee is particularly impressed by the library's assistance to the teaching and learning process. **The one issue the committee recommends is that the library consider purchasing political science texts that are available in Arabic.**

The Department evaluated its overall performance in Infrastructure:

(1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs significant improvements, 3=needs minor improvements, 4=satisfactory, 5=highly satisfactory)

	1	2	3	4	5
					X

The Evaluation Committee evaluated the Department's overall performance in Infrastructure:

	1	2	3	4	5
					X

The Committee concurs with the rating of the Department, in its performance in “Infrastructure”.

Section 4: Recommendations

Essential

The Committee recommends that, if staffing resources in the Department migrate into the new MA program, these staffing resources should be replaced without delay.

Important

The Committee recommends introducing a new hire of a permanent faculty specializing in global affairs (IR and Comparative Politics).

The Committee recommends that YVC significantly strengthen the provision of English teaching, particularly focusing on improving the capabilities of students to express themselves orally and in writing.

The Committee recommends that the Department investigates ways to encourage more mentoring of junior faculty.

The Committee recommends that the College better facilitate the means to achieve its research aims, as stipulated by the means listed in the Research section of this report.

The Committee recommends that the library should consider purchasing classical and contemporary Political Science texts that have been translated into Arabic.

Desirable

The Committee recommends that the College considers introducing a new track in “Political Science and Global Affairs,” which would be offered as part of the current BA program.

The Committee recommends that the college makes more transparent the way in which it considers scholarships to students, which are based on either minority status or income.

The Committee recommends that better clarity should be given to faculty on both the research and service components of the promotions criteria.

The Committee recommends that the college better promote itself by drawing attention to its excellent track record in nurturing diversity in the higher education environment.

The Committee recommends to the CHE that it should recognize and reward research that is relevant to the communities in which the colleges are embedded.

Signed by:

Prof. Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey
Committee Chair

Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey

Prof. Dr. Tanja A. Börzel

Tanja A. Börzel

Prof. Joel Migdal

Joel Migdal

Prof. James Perry

James L. Perry

Prof. Avner de Shalit

Avner de Shalit

Appendix I: Letter of Appointment



July 2022

Prof. Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey
Department of Government
London School of Economics
UK

Dear Professor,

The Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) strives to ensure the continuing excellence and quality of Israeli higher education through a systematic evaluation process. By engaging upon this mission, the CHE seeks: to enhance and ensure the quality of academic studies, to provide the public with information regarding the quality of study programs in institutions of higher education throughout Israel, and to ensure the continued integration of the Israeli system of higher education in the international academic arena.

As part of this important endeavor we reach out to world renowned academicians to help us meet the challenges that confront the Israeli higher education by accepting our invitation to participate in our international evaluation committees. This process establishes a structure for an ongoing consultative process around the globe on common academic dilemmas and prospects.

I therefore deeply appreciate your willingness to join us in this crucial enterprise.

It is with great pleasure that I hereby appoint you to serve as the chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of **Political Science and International Relations** departments. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Tanja A. Börzel, Prof. Joel Migdal, Prof. James Perry, Prof. Avner de Shalit, Prof. Cameron Thies.

Ms. Pe'er Baris-Barnea will be the coordinator of the Committee.

I wish you much success in your role as a member of this most important committee.

Sincerely,

Prof. Edit Tshuva,
Vice Chair,
The Council for Higher Education (CHE)

Enclosures: Appendix to the Appointment Letter of Evaluation Committees

cc: Dr. Varda Ben-Shaul, Deputy Director-General for QA, CHE
Dr. Liran Gordon, Senior Advisor for Evaluation and Quality Enhancement
Ms. Pe'er Baris-Barnea, Committee Coordinator